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Stanford law school opens new law clinic to provide free legal services for residents

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Stanford University's law school has opened a community law clinic in East Palo Alto that will provide free legal services to the city's residents as well as residents from eastern Menlo Park and Redwood City.

Housed in a former East Palo Alto medical center at 2117 University Ave., the law clinic will assist clients with legal problems related to housing, workers' rights and government benefits.

Although the clinic is designed to help low-income residents with legal troubles, its primary purpose will be to provide clinical training to Stanford law students. Students will conduct interviews, prepare cases and represent clients in court under the direct supervision of three attorneys who have been hired to work for the clinic.

Stanford also plans to involve lawyers from local firms who will work in a new project called the Pro Bono Clinic, which will focus on guardianship and consumer issues.

The Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County is assisting Stanford. The law school plans to host an open house at the clinic at 4:30 p.m. April 2.

Stanford has said the clinic will fill a void created by the departure of the East Palo Alto Community Law Project, which closed its doors last August. The project, a community cornerstone that had provided free legal services for 19 years, closed because of funding troubles.